Present Continuous Tense

SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH GRAMMAR GUIDE & REFERENCE SHEET

Subject + am / is / are + Verb (-ing)

1. Sentence Structure & Forms

Subject	Auxiliary (to be)	Verb + -ing	Example Sentence
I	am ('m)	studying	I am studying for my English exam right now.
He / She / It	is ('s)	listening	She is listening to the teacher.
We / You / They	are ('re)	playing	They are playing football in the court.

Type	Structure	Example
Positive (+)	Subject + am/is/are + V-ing	He **is reading** a book at the moment.
Negative (-)	Subject + am/is/are + **not** + V-ing	He **is not (isn't) reading** a book at the moment.
Question (?)	Am/Is/Are + Subject + V-ing?	**Is** he **reading** a book at the moment?

2. When to Use It (4 Main Functions)

- **Actions happening right now:** Happening at the precise moment of speaking.
  → *Look! It is raining heavily outside.*
- **Temporary situations:** Actions happening around now, but not permanently.
  → *My brother is staying with my uncle this week.*
- **Changing or developing situations:** Trends or continuous progress.
  → *Your English vocabulary is getting better every day.*
- **Fixed future arrangements:** Plans already arranged for a specific future time.
  → *We are meeting the school principal tomorrow at 10:00 AM.*

3. Key Keywords & Time Expressions

Right now | At the moment | Currently | Today | This week / month | Look! | Listen! | Be quiet! | At present

4. Spelling Rules for `-ing` Endings

Rule	Base Verb	-ing Form
General rule: Add -ing	play, work, read	playing, working, reading
Ends in silent -e: Drop 'e' + add -ing	write, make, drive	writing, making, driving *(Exception: see → seeing)*
Ends in -ie: Change 'ie' to 'y' + add -ing	die, lie, tie	dying, lying, tying
Consonant + Vowel + Consonant (CVC): Double final consonant	run, sit, swim	running, sitting, swimming

⚠️ Exam Watch Out: Stative Verbs

Stative verbs describe states, thoughts, feelings, or possession (not physical actions). **Do NOT use stative verbs in the continuous tense.** Use Present Simple instead!

❌ *Incorrect:* I am wanting an ice cream right now.
✅ *Correct:* I **want** an ice cream right now.

Common Stative Verbs: love, like, hate, want, need, know, understand, believe, remember, belong, own, see, hear.

Quick Practice Quiz

1. Listen! The teacher _____ (explain) an important rule.
2. They _____ (not / play) video games right now; they are studying.
3. _____ you _____ (come) to the football match this afternoon?
4. I _____ (understand) this grammar lesson very well now. *(Be careful!)*